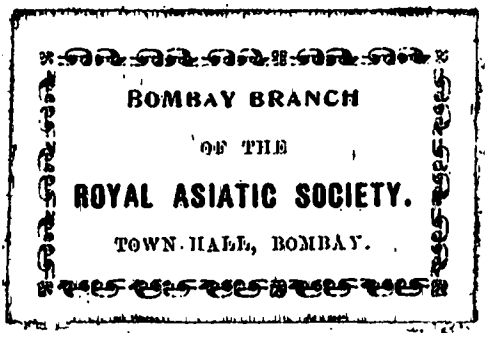
STATEMENTS OF CHRISTIAN DOCTRINE AND PRACTICE

JOWETT

GOD
230
Jow/Sta
110715

00110715

B.B.R.A.S.



Digitized with financial assistance from the
Government of Maharashtra
on 19 September, 2016

STATEMENTS

OF

CHRISTIAN DOCTRINE AND PRACTICE

110715

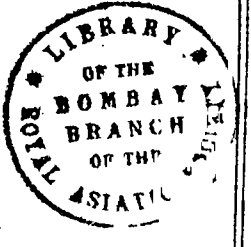
EXTRACTED FROM

THE PUBLISHED WRITINGS

OF THE

REV. BENJAMIN JOWETT, M.A.,

REGIUS PROFESSOR OF GREEK IN THE UNIVERSITY OF OXFORD.



B-6-54

OXFORD,
J. H. AND JAS. PARKER;
AND 377, STRAND, LONDON.
1861.

God
230
Dou 154
110715

Printed by Messrs. Parker, Cornmarket, Oxford.

PREFACE.

THE following extracts have been made from Professor Jowett's writings without his sanction and knowledge. It is hoped that, as this practice has been largely adopted by those who have attacked or misrepresented his opinions, he will forgive the liberty which his friends have taken in placing before the public a collection of passages which in most notices of his works have been withheld from view.

In "Critical Dissertations" on a difficult portion of Holy Scripture, it is not usually expected that much will be found of a directly devotional, or dogmatic, or practical character. When a similar collection of extracts was made in 1836 with the object of vindicating the present Bishop of Hereford, they were almost entirely drawn, not from his theological works, but from a volume of Parochial Sermons. Such a volume Professor Jowett has not published, and, in the present instance, shortness of time, and the need of selecting passages which could be separated from long and complicated arguments, have unavoidably abridged the number of those here set forth as specimens of their Author's practical teaching.

But it is thought that the following extracts will suffice to shew whether the spirit which breathes through these pages is likely to destroy or to confirm the faith of the rising generation; whether it is the spirit of an "enemy of Christ," or of one who

is amongst His faithful followers; whether it is a spirit at variance, or in unity, with the best teaching of the Prayer-book and the highest interests of the Church of England. It is believed, moreover, that, independently of any temporary agitation, such a collection of passages will (even with those who may not entirely agree with them) be generally useful for the purposes of Christian edification, as helps to a careful and reverent study of the Bible, and as testimonies to its Divine excellence and authority.

ST. PAUL.

"THERE is a growth in the Epistles of St. Paul it is true; but it is the growth of Christian life, not of intellectual progress,—the growth not of reflection, but of spiritual experience, enlarging as the world widens before the Apostle's eyes, passing from life to death, or from strife to peace, with the changes in the Apostle's own life or the circumstances of his converts. There is a rest also in the Epistles of St. Paul, discernible not in forms of thought or types of doctrine, but in the Person of Christ Himself, who is his centre in every Epistle, however various may be his modes of expression, or his treatment of controversial questions."—(*St. Paul's Epistles*, vol. i. pp. 3, 4.)

"So he passed away, rejoicing in persecution also, and 'filling up that which was behind of the afflictions of Christ, for his body's sake.' Many, if not most, of his followers had forsaken him, and there is no certain memorial of the manner of his death. Let us look once more a little closer at that 'visage marred' in his Master's service, as it appeared about three years before on a well-known scene. A poor aged man, worn by some bodily or mental disorder, who had been often scourged, and bore on his face the traces of indignity and sorrow in every form—such an one, led out of prison between Roman soldiers, probably at times faltering in his utterance, the creature, as he seemed to spectators, of nervous sensibility; yearning, almost with a sort of fondness, to save the souls of those whom he saw around him,—spoke a few eloquent words in the cause of Christian truth, at which kings were awed, telling the tale of his own conversion with such simple pathos, that after ages have hardly heard the like.

"Such is the image, not which Christian art has delighted to consecrate, but which the Apostle has left in his own writings of himself; an image of true wisdom, and nobleness, and affection, but of a wisdom unlike the wisdom of this world; of a nobleness which must not be transformed into that of the heroes of the world; an affection which seemed

to be as strong and as individual towards all mankind, as other men are capable of feeling towards a single person."—(Vol. i. pp. 367, 368.)

"What was the difference between the teaching of St. Paul and the Twelve? was it one of doctrine or of practice, of belief or of spirit? Viewed as a matter of doctrine or belief the difference was not great. So the Apostle himself seems to allow when denouncing most strongly the Judaizing teachers. All baptized in the name of Christ, with whom the Twelve had walked while He was upon earth, whose witnesses they were; of whom, too, St. Paul claimed to be a later witness (1 Cor. ix. 1), as 'one born out of due time.' (1 Cor. xv. 8.) It was the same Christ whom they preached; there was no dispute about this—'false knowledge' had not yet severed from reality the person of Jesus of Nazareth. 'Other foundation could no man lay than that is laid,' (1 Cor. iii. 11), as the Apostle says to the Church at Corinth, though he might build many superstructures. It was not 'another Gospel,' as he indignantly declares to the Church in Galatia (Gal. i. 7), for there was not, and could not be another."—(Vol. i. p. 438.)

"Philo, in his conception of faith, falls equally short of St. Paul. Both in Philo and St. Paul faith is trust in God, and belief in His promises. But in St. Paul it is more than this, a faith such as may remove mountains, a confidence that 'all things' are ours, 'whether life or death, or things present or things to come.' It is the instrument of union with Christ, and, through Him, of communion with all mankind. The faith of Philo is bound up in the curtains of the tabernacle; it is the faith which believes that God will keep His covenant with the sons of Abraham; not that 'God is able of these stones to raise up children unto Abraham;' the faith of St. Paul is absolute and infinite; it breaks down the wall of partition which divides the Jew from the Gentile and earth from heaven."—(Vol. i. p. 512.)

"That sense of the invisible which to most men it is so difficult to impart, was like a second nature to St. Paul. He

walked by faith, and not by sight; what was strange to him was the life he now led; which in his own often repeated language was death rather than life, the place of shadows and not of realities. The Greek philosophers spoke of a world of phenomena, of true being, of knowledge and opinion; and we know that what they meant by these distinctions is something different from the tenets of any philosophical school of the present day. But not less different is what St. Paul meant by the life hidden with Christ in God, the communion of the Spirit, the possession of the mind of Christ; only that this was not a mere difference of speculation, but of practice also. Could any one say now,—'the life,' not that I live, but that 'Christ liveth in me'? Such language with St. Paul is no mere phraseology, such as is repeated from habit in prayers, but the original consciousness of the Apostle respecting his own state. Self is banished from him, and has no more place in him, as he goes on his way to fulfil the work of Christ. No figure is too strong to express his humiliation in himself, or his exaltation in Christ.

"Could we expect this to be otherwise when we think of the manner of his conversion? Could he have looked upon the world with the same eyes that we do, or heard its many voices with the same ears, who had been caught up into the seventh heaven, whether in the body or out of the body he could not tell? (2 Cor. xii. 1—5.) Must not his life have seemed to him a revelation, an inspiration, an ecstasy? Once and again he had seen the face of Christ, and heard Him speak from heaven. All that followed in the Apostle's history was the continuation of that first wonder, a stream of light flowing from it, 'planting eyes' in his soul, transfiguring him 'from glory to glory,' clothing him with the elect 'in the exceeding glory.'"—(Vol. i. pp. 360, 361.)

"Mysticism, or enthusiasm, or intense benevolence and philanthropy, seem to us, as they commonly are, at variance with worldly prudence and moderation. But in the Apostle these different and contrasted qualities are mingled and harmonised. The mother watching over the life of her child has all her faculties aroused and stimulated; she knows almost by instinct how to say or do the right thing at the right

time; she regards his faults with mingled love and sorrow. So, in the Apostle, we seem to trace a sort of refinement or nicety of feeling, when he is dealing with the souls of men. All his knowledge of mankind shews itself for their sakes; and yet not that knowledge of mankind which comes from without, revealing itself by experience of men and manners, by taking a part in events, by the insensible course of years making us learn from what we have seen and suffered. There is another experience that comes from within, which begins with the knowledge of self, with the consciousness of our own weakness and infirmities; which is continued in love to others and in works of good to them; which grows by singleness and simplicity of heart. Love becomes the interpreter of how men think, and feel, and act; and supplies the place of, or passes into, a worldly prudence wiser than the prudence of this world. Such is the worldly prudence of St. Paul.

"Once more; there is in the Apostle, not only prudence, and knowledge of the human heart, but a kind of subtlety of moderation, which considers every conceivable case, and balances one with another; in the last resort giving no rule, but allowing all to be superseded by a more general principle. An instance of this subtle moderation is his determination, or rather omission to determine the question of meats and drinks, which he first regards as indifferent, secondly, as depending on men's own conscience, and this again as limited by the consciences of others, and lastly resolves all these finer precepts into the general principle, 'Whatever ye do, do all to the glory of God.' The same qualification of one principle by another recurs again in his rules respecting marriage. First, 'do not marry unbelievers,' and 'let not the wife depart from her husband.' But if you are married and the unbeliever is willing to remain, then the spirit of the second precept must prevail over the first. Only in an extreme case, where both parties are willing to dissolve the tie, the first principle in turn may again supersede the second. It may be said in the one case, 'your children are holy;' in the other, 'What knowest thou, O wife, if thou shalt save thy husband?' In a similar spirit he withdraws his censure on the incestuous person, lest such an one, criminal as he was, should be swallowed up with overmuch

sorrow. There is a religious aspect of either course of conduct, and either may be right under given circumstances. So the kingdoms of this world admit of being regarded almost as the kingdom of God, in reference to our duties towards their rulers; and yet touching the going to law before unbelievers, we are to think rather of that other kingdom in which we shall judge angels."—(Vol. i. pp. 363—365.)

THE FUTURE LIFE.

"THE belief in a future life is not derived from revelation, though greatly strengthened by it. It is the growing sense of human nature respecting itself. Scarcely any one passes out of existence fearing that he will cease to be; perhaps no one whose mind may be regarded as in a natural state. Absurd superstitions, even the painful efforts to get rid of self, in some of the Eastern religions, indirectly bear witness to the same truth. They seem to say, 'Stamp upon the soul, crush it as you will, the poor worm will still creep out into the sunshine of the Almighty.' Nor is the consciousness of another life a mere instinct which, however distorted, still remains: to those who reason it is inseparably connected with our highest, that is, with our moral notions. We feel that God cannot have given us capacities and affections, that they should find no other fulfilment than they attain here; that He cannot intend the unequal measure of good and evil which He has assigned to men on earth to be the end of all; nor can we believe that the crimes or sins which go unpunished in this world, are to pass away as though they had never been; that the cries of saints and heroes, and the work of the Saviour Himself, have gone up unheard before His throne. That can never be. Equally impossible is it to suppose that creatures whom He has endowed with reason are, like the great multitude of the human race, to be sunk for ever in hopeless ignorance and unconsciousness. It is true that the nature of the change which is to come over them and us is not disclosed: 'The times and the seasons the Father has put in His own power.' Had it been otherwise, immortality must have overpowered us; the thought of another state would have swallowed up this.

"And this sense of a future life and judgment to come has been so quickened in us by Christianity, that it may be said almost to have been created by it. It is the witness of Christ Himself, than which to the Christian no assurance can be greater. He who meditates on this divine life

in the brief narrative which has been preserved of it, will find the belief in another world come again to him when many physical and metaphysical proofs are beginning to be as broken reeds. He will find more than enough to balance the difficulties of the manner 'how' or the time 'when;' he will find, as he draws nearer to Christ, a sort of impossibility of believing otherwise. When we ask, 'How are the dead raised up, and with what body do they come?' St. Paul answers, 'Thou fool, that which thou sowest is not quickened except it die;' when we raise objections to the narrative which has been preserved of our Saviour's discourse respecting the last things and the end of the world, may not the answer to this as well as to many other difficulties be gathered from His own words—'It is the Spirit that quickeneth, the flesh profiteth nothing; the words that I speak unto you, they are spirit, and they are truth?'

"There was a sense in which our Saviour said that it was better for His disciples that He should be taken from them, that the Comforter should come unto them. There is also a blessing recorded in the Gospels on those who had not seen and yet had believed. Is there not a sense in which it is more blessed to live at a distance from those events which are the beginning of Christianity, than under their immediate influence, to see them as they truly are in the light of this world as well as of another? If it was an illusion in the first Christians to believe in the immediate coming of Christ, is it not a cause of thankfulness that now we see clearly? Of truth, as well as of love, it may be said there is no fear in truth, but perfect truth casteth out fear. The eye which is strong enough to pierce through the shadow of death, is not troubled because the golden mist is dispelled and it looks on the open heaven.

"And though prophecy may fail and tongues cease, though to those who look back upon them when they are with the past, they are different from what they were to those who melted under their influence, the pure moral and spiritual nature of Christianity, the 'kingdom of God within,' remains as at first, the law of Christian love becoming more and more, and all in all."—(Vol. i. pp. 122—124.)

LOVE OF CHRIST.

"THE sight, once for all, of Christ crucified, recalling the thought of what, more than 1800 years ago, He suffered for us, has ravished the heart and melted the affections, and made the world seem new, and covered the earth itself with a fair vision, that is, a heavenly one. The strength of this feeling arises from its being directed towards a person, a real being, an individual like ourselves, who has actually endured all this for our sakes, who was above us, and yet became one of us and felt as we did, and was like ourselves a true man. The love which He felt towards us, we seek to return to Him; the unity which He has with the Divine nature, He communicates to us; His Father is our Father, His God our God. And as human love draws men onwards to make sacrifices, and to undergo sufferings for the good of others, Divine love also leads us to cast away the interests of this world, and rest only in the noblest object of love. And this love is not only a feeling or sentiment, or attachment, such as we may entertain towards a parent, a child, or a wife, in which, pure and disinterested as it may be, some shadow of earthly passion unavoidably mingles; it is also the highest exercise of the reason, which it seems to endow with the force of the affections, making us think and feel at once. And although it begins in gentleness, and tenderness, and weakness, and is often supposed to be more natural to women than men, yet it grows up also to 'the fulness of the stature of the perfect man.' The truest note of the depth and sincerity of our feelings towards our fellow creatures is a manly,—that is, a self-controlled—temper: still more is this true of the love of the soul towards Christ and God.

"Every one knows what it is to become like those whom we admire or esteem; the impress which a disciple may sometimes have received from his teacher, or the servant from his Lord. Such devotion to a particular person can rarely be thought to open our hearts to love others also; it often tends to weaken the force of individual character. But the love of Christ is the conducting medium to the love of all mankind;

the image which He impresses upon us is the image not of any particular individual, but of the Son of Man. And this image, as we draw nearer to it, is transfigured into the image of the Son of God. As we become like Him, we see Him as He is; and see ourselves and all other things with true human sympathy. Lastly, we are sensible that more than all we feel towards Him, He feels towards us, and that it is He who is drawing us to Him, while we seem to be drawing to Him ourselves. This is a part of that mystery of which the Apostle speaks, 'of the length, and depth, and breadth of the love of Christ,' which passeth knowledge. Mere human love rests on instincts, the working of which we cannot explain, but which nevertheless touch the inmost springs of our being. So, too, we have spiritual instincts, acting towards higher objects, still more suddenly and wonderfully capturing our souls in an instant, and making us indifferent to all things else. Such instincts shew themselves in the weak no less than in the strong; they seem to be not so much an original part of our nature as to fulfil our nature, and add to it, and draw it out, until they make us different beings to ourselves and others. It was the quaint fancy of a sentimentalist to ask whether any one who remembers the first sight of a beloved person, could doubt the existence of magic. We may ask another question, Can any one who has ever known the love of Christ, doubt the existence of a spiritual power?"—(Vol. ii. pp. 245, 246.)

PRAYER.

"THE instrument whereby, above all others, we realise the power of God, and the love of Christ, which carries us into their presence, and places us within the circle of a Divine yet personal influence, is prayer. Prayer is the summing up of the Christian life in a definite act, which is at once inward and outward, the power of which on the character, like that of any other act, is proportioned to its intensity. The imagination of doing rightly adds little to our strength; even the wish to do so is not necessarily accompanied by a change of heart and conduct. But in prayer we imagine, and wish, and perform all in one. Our imperfect resolutions are offered up to God; our weakness becomes strength, our words deeds. No other action is so mysterious; there is none in which we seem, in the same manner, to renounce ourselves that we may be one with God.

"Of what nature that prayer is which is effectual to the obtaining of its requests is a question of the same kind as what constitutes a true faith. That prayer, we should reply, which is itself most of an act, which is most immediately followed by action, which is most truthful, manly, self-controlled, which seems to lead and direct, rather than to follow, our natural emotions. That prayer which is its own answer because it asks not for any temporal good, but for union with God. That prayer which begins with the confession, 'We know not what to pray for as we ought;' which can never by any possibility interfere with the laws of nature, because even in extremity of danger or suffering, it seeks only the fulfilment of His will. That prayer which acknowledges that our enemies, or those of a different faith, are equally with ourselves in the hands of God; in which we never unwittingly ask for our own good at the expense of others. That prayer in which faith is strong enough to submit to experience; in which the soul of man is nevertheless conscious not of any self-produced impression, but of a true communion with the Author and Maker of his being."

"In prayer, as in all religion, there is something that it is impossible to describe, and that seems to be untrue the moment it is expressed in words. In the relations of man with God, it is vain to attempt to separate what belongs to the finite and what to the infinite. We can feel, but we cannot analyse it. We can lay down practical rules for it, but can give no adequate account of it. It is a mystery which we do not need to fathom. In all religion there is an element of which we are conscious;—which is no mystery, which ought to be and is on a level with reason and experience. There is something besides, which, in those who give way to every vague spiritual emotion, may often fall below reason (for to them it becomes a merely physical state); which may also raise us above ourselves, until reason and feeling meet in one, and the life on earth even of the poor and ignorant answers to the description of the Apostle, 'Having your conversation in heaven.'

"'This partial indistinctness of the subject of religion, even independently of mysticism or superstition, may become to intellectual minds a ground for doubting the truth of that which will not be altogether reduced to the rules of human knowledge, which seems to elude our grasp, and retires into the recesses of the soul the moment we ask for the demonstration of its existence. Against this natural suspicion let us set two observations: first, that if the Gospel had spoken to the reason only, and not to the feelings—if 'the way to the blessed life' had to be won by clearness of ideas, then it is impossible that 'to the poor the Gospel should have been first preached.' It would have begun at the other end of society, and probably remained, like Greek philosophy, the abstraction of educated men. Secondly, let us remark that even now, judged by its effects, the power of religion is of all powers the greatest. Knowledge itself is a weak instrument to stir the soul compared with religion; morality has no way to the heart of man: but the Gospel reaches the feelings and the intellect at once. In nations as well as individuals, in barbarous times as well as civilised, in the great crises of history especially, even in the latest ages, when the minds of men seem to wax cold, and all things remain the same as at the beginning, it has shewn itself to be a reality without

which human nature would cease to be what it is. Almost every one has had the witness of it in himself. No one, says Plato, ever passed from youth to age in unbelief of the gods, in heathen times. Hardly any educated person in a Christian land has passed from youth to age without some aspiration after a better life, some thought of the country to which he is going.

"As a fact, it would be admitted by most that, at some period of their lives, the thought of the world to come and of future judgment, the beauty and loveliness of the truths of the Gospel, the sense of the shortness of our days here, have wrought a more quickening and powerful effect than any moral truths or prudential maxims. Many a one would acknowledge that he has been carried whither he knew not, and had nobler thoughts, and felt higher aspirations, than the course of his ordinary life seemed to allow. These were the most important moments of his life for good or for evil; the critical points which have made him what he is, either as he used or neglected them. They came he knew not how, sometimes with some outward and apparent cause, at other times without,—the result of affliction or sickness, or 'the wind blowing where it listeth.'"—(Vol. ii. pp. 246—249.)

CONVERSION.

"SCRIPTURE and reason alike require that we should entirely turn to God, that we should obey the whole law. And hard as this may seem at first, there is a witness within us which pleads that it is possible. Our mind and moral nature are one; we cannot break ourselves into pieces in action any more than in thought. The whole man is in every part and in every act. This is not a mere mode of thought, but a truth of great practical importance. 'Easier to change many things than one,' is the common saying. Easier, we may add, in religion or morality to change the whole than the part. Easier because more natural, more agreeable to the voice of conscience and the promises of Scripture. God Himself deals with us as a whole; He does not forgive us in part any more than He requires us to serve Him in part. It may be true that, of the thousand hearers of the appeal of the preacher, not above one begins a new life. And some persons will imagine that it might be better to make an impression on them little by little, like the effect of the dropping of water upon stone. Not in this way is the Gospel written down on the fleshly tables of the heart. More true to our own experience of self, as well as to the words of Scripture, are such ideas as renovation, renewal, regeneration, taking up the cross and following Christ, dying with Christ that we may also live with Him.

"Many a person will tease himself by counting minutes and providing small rules for his life, who would have found the task an easier and a nobler one, had he viewed it in its whole extent, and gone to God in a 'large and liberal spirit,' to offer [illegible] To have no *arrière pensée* in the service of God and virtue, the great source of peace and happiness. Make clean that which is within, and you have no need to purify that which is without. Take care of the little things of life, and the great ones will take care of themselves is the maxim of the trader, which is sometimes, and with certain degree of truth, applied to the service of

God. But much more true is it in religion that we should take care of the great things, and the trifles of life will take care of themselves. 'If thine eye be single, thy whole body will be full of light.' Christianity is not acquired as an art, by long practice; it does not carve and polish human nature with a graving tool: it makes the whole man; first pouring out his soul before God, and then 'casting him in a mould.' Its workings are not to be measured by time, even though among educated persons, and in modern times, sudden and momentary conversions can rarely occur."—(Vol. ii. pp. 235, 236.)

THE PREACHING OF THE GOSPEL TO THE POOR.

"The Gospel is still preached to the poor as before, in the same sacred yet familiar language. They could not understand questions of grammar before; they do not understand modes of thought now. It is the peculiar nature of our religious ideas that we are able to apply them, and to receive comfort from them, without being able to analyze or explain them. All the metaphysical and logical speculations in the world will not rob the poor, the sick, or the dying of the truths of the Gospel. Yet the subject which we have been considering is not without a practical result. It warns us to restore the Gospel to its simplicity, to turn from the letter to the spirit, to withdraw from the number of the essentials of Christianity points almost too subtle for the naked eye, which depend on modes of thought or Alexandrian usages, to require no more of preciseness or definition than is necessary to give form and substance to our teaching. Not only the feebleness of human faculties, but the imperfection of language itself will often make silence our truest wisdom. The saying of Scaliger, taken not seriously but in irony, is full of meaning: —'Many a man has missed of his salvation from ignorance of grammar.'

"To the poor and uneducated, at times to all, no better advice can be given for the understanding of Scripture than to read the Bible humbly with prayer. The critical and metaphysical student requires another sort of rule, for which this can never be made a substitute. His duty is to throw himself back into the times, the modes of thought, the language of the Apostolic age. He must pass from the abstract to the concrete, from the ideal and intellectual to the spiritual, from later statements of faith or doctrine to the words of inspiration which fell from the lips of the first believers. He must seek to conceive the religion of Christ in its relation to the religions of other ages and distant countries, to the philosophy of our own or other times; and if in this

effort his mind seems to fail or waver, he must win back in life and practice the hold on the truths of the Gospel which he is beginning to lose in the mazes of speculation."—(Vol. ii. pp. 108, 109.)

"If reason and reflection seem to weaken as they regulate the springs of human action, this very fact may lead us to consider that reason, and reflection, and education, and the experience of age, and the force of manly sense, are not the links which bind us to the communion of the body of Christ; that it is rather to those qualities which we have, or may have, in common with our fellow men, that the Gospel is promised; and that it is with the weak, the poor, the babes in Christ,—not with the strong-minded, the resolute, the consistent,—that we shall sit down in the kingdom of heaven."—(Vol. ii. p. 249.)

IT IS ONE GOD WHICH SHALL JUSTIFY THE CIRCUMCISION BY FAITH, AND UNCIRCUMCISION THROUGH FAITH.

"LET us turn aside for a moment to consider how great this thought was in that age and country; a thought which the wisest of men had never before uttered, which at the present hour we imperfectly realise, which is still leavening the world, and shall do so until the whole is leavened, and the differences of races, of nations, of castes, of religions, of languages, are finally done away. Nothing could seem a less natural or obvious lesson in the then state of the world, nothing could be more at variance with experience, or more difficult to carry out into practice. Even to us it is hard to imagine that the islander of the South Seas, the pariah of India, the African in his worst estate, is equally with ourselves God's creature. But in the age of St. Paul how great must have been the difficulty of conceiving barbarian and Scythian, bond and free, all colours, forms, races, and languages alike and equal in the presence of God who made them! The origin of the human race was veiled in a deeper mystery to the ancient world, and the lines which separated mankind were harder and stronger; yet the 'love of Christ constraining' bound together in its cords, those most separated by time or distance, those who were the types of the most extreme differences of which the human form is capable.

"The idea of this brotherhood of all mankind, the great family on earth, implies that all men have certain ties with us, and certain rights at our hands. The truest way in which we can regard them is as they appear in the sight of God, from Whom they can never suffer wrong: nor from us, while we think of them as His creatures equally with ourselves. There is yet a closer bond with them as our brethren in the Gospel. No one can interpose impediments of rank or fortune, or colour or religious opinion, between those who are one in Christ. Beyond and above such transitory differences is the work of Christ, 'making all things

kin.' Moreover, the remembrance of this brotherhood is a rest to us when our 'light is low,' and the world and its distinctions are passing from our sight, and our thoughts are of the dark valley and the solitary way. For it leads us to trust in God, not as selecting us, because He had a favour unto us, but as infinitely just to all mankind. It links our fortunes with those of men in general, and gives us the same support in reference to our eternal destiny, that we receive from each other in a narrow sphere in the concerns of daily life. To think of ourselves, or our Church, or our country, or our age, as the particular exceptions which a Divine mercy makes, whether in this life or another, is not a thought of comfort, but of perplexity. Lastly: — It relieves us from anxiety about the condition of other men, of friends departed, of those ignorant of the Gospel, of those of a different form of faith from our own; knowing that God who has thus far lifted up the veil, 'will justify the circumcision through faith, and the uncircumcision by faith;' the Jew who fulfils the law, and the Gentile who does by nature the things contained in the law."—(Vol. ii. pp. 140, 141.)

THE FIRST AND SECOND ADAM.

"THE figure of the Apostle bears the impress of his own age and country; the interpretation of the figure is for every age, and for the whole world. A figure of speech it remains still, an allegory after the manner of that age and country, but yet with no uncertain or ambiguous signification. It means that 'God hath made of one blood all the nations of the earth;' and that 'He hath concluded all under sin, that He may have mercy upon all.' It means a truth deep yet simple,—the fact which we recognise in ourselves and trace everywhere around us,—that we are one in a common evil nature, which, if it be not derived from the sin of Adam, exists as really as if it were. It means that we shall be made one in Christ, by the grace of God, in a measure here, more fully and perfectly in another world. It means that Christ is the natural head of the human race, the author of its spiritual life. It shews Him to us as He enters within the veil, in form as a man, the 'first-fruits of them which sleep.' It is a sign or intimation which guides our thoughts in another direction also, beyond the world of which religion speaks, to observe what science tells us of the interdependence of soul and body—what history tells of the chain of lives and events. It leads us to reflect on ourselves not as isolated, independent beings;—not such as we appear to be to our own narrow consciousness; but as we truly are—the creatures of antecedents which we can never know, fashioned by circumstances over which we have no control. The infant, coming into existence in a wonderful manner, inherits something, not from its parents only, but from the first beginning of the human race. He too is born into a family of which God in Christ is the Father. There is enough here to meditate upon—'a mystery since the world was'—without the 'weak and beggarly' elements of Rabbinical lore. We may not encumber St. Paul 'with the things which he destroyed.'"
—(Vol. ii. p. 187.)

CHRISTIAN PRUDENCE.

"The law, then, of Christian prudence, using that moderation which we shew in things pertaining to this life; or the law of Christian charity, resolving, and as it were absorbing, our scruples in the love of other men; or the law of the individual conscience, making that right to a man in matters in themselves indifferent which seems to be so; or the law of freedom, giving us a spirit, instead of a letter, and enlarging the first principles of the doctrine of Christ; or all together,—shall furnish the doubting believer with a sufficient rule of faith and conduct. Even the law of Christian charity is a rule of freedom rather than of restraint, in proportion as it places men above questions of meats and drinks, and enables them to regard such disputes only by the light of love to God and man. For there is a tyranny which even freedom may exercise, when it makes us intolerant of other men's difficulties. 'Where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty;' but there is also a liberty without the Spirit of the Lord. To eat with unwashen hands defileth not a man; but to denounce those who do, or do not do so, may, in St. Paul's language, cause not only the weak brother, but him that fancieth he standeth, to fall; and so, in a false endeavour to preach the Gospel of Christ, men 'may perish for whom Christ died.'"—(Vol. ii. p. 392.)

CASUISTRY AND CONFESSION.

"CASUISTRY not only renders us independent of our own convictions, it renders us independent also of the opinion of mankind in general. It puts the confessor in the place of ourselves, and in the place of the world. By making the actions of men matters of science, it cuts away the supports and safeguards which public opinion gives to morality; the confessor in the silence of the closet easily introduces principles from which the common sense or conscience of mankind would have shrunk back. Especially in matters of truth and falsehood, in the nice sense of honour shown in the unwillingness to get others within our power, his standard will probably fall short of that of the world at large. Public opinion, it is true, drives men's vices inwards; it teaches them to conceal their faults from others, and if possible from themselves, and this very concealment may sink them in despair, or cover them with self-deceit. And the soul—whose 'house is its castle'—has an enemy within, the strength of which may be often increased by communications from without. Yet the good of this privacy is on the whole greater than the evil. Not only is the outward aspect of society more decorous, and the confidence between man and man less liable to be impaired; the mere fact of men's sins being known to themselves and God only, and the support afforded even by the undeserved opinion of their fellows, are of themselves great helps to a moral and religious life. Many a one by being thought better than he was has become better; by being thought as bad or worse has become worse. To communicate our sins to those who have no claim to know them is of itself a diminution of our moral strength. It throws upon others what we ought to do for ourselves; it leads us to seek in the sympathy of others a strength which no sympathy can give. It is a greater trust than is right for us commonly to repose in our fellow-creatures; it places us in their power; it may make us their tools."—(Vol. ii. pp. 406, 407.)

"No insight of the confessor can make him clairvoyant of the penitent's soul. Know ourselves we sometimes truly may, but we cannot know others, and no other can know us. No other can know or understand us in the same wonderful or mysterious way; no other can be conscious of the spirit in which we have lived; no other can see us as a whole, or get within. God has placed a veil of flesh between ourselves and other men, to screen the nakedness of our soul. Into the secret chamber He does not require that we should admit any other judge or counsellor but Himself. Two eyes only are upon us,—the eye of our own soul, the eye of God,—and the one is the light of the other. That is the true light, on the which if a man look he will have a knowledge of himself different in kind from that which the confessor extracts from the books of the casuists."—(Vol. ii. p. 405.)

MISSIONS.

"THE command remains: 'Go forth and preach the Gospel to every creature.' Nor can any blessing be conceived greater than the spread of Christianity among heathen nations, nor any calling nobler or higher to which Christians can devote themselves. Why are we unable to fulfil this command in any effectual manner? Is it that the Gospel has had barriers set to it, and that the stream no longer overflows on the surrounding territory; that we have enough of this water for ourselves, but not enough for us and them? or that the example of nominal Christians, who are bent on their own trade or interest, destroys the lesson which has been preached by the ministers of religion? Yet the lives of believers did not prevent the spread of Christianity at Corinth and Ephesus. And it is hard to suppose that the religion which is true for ourselves has lost its vital power in the world.

"The truth seems to be, not that Christianity has lost its power, but that we are seeking to propagate Christianity under circumstances which, during the eighteen centuries of its existence, it has never yet encountered. Perhaps there may have been a want of zeal, or discretion, or education in the preachers; sometimes there may have been too great a desire to impress on the mind of the heathen some peculiar doctrine, instead of the more general lesson of 'righteousness, temperance, judgment to come.' But however this may be, there is no reason to believe that even if a saint or apostle could rise from the dead, he would produce by his preaching alone, without the use of other means, any wide or deep impression on India or China. To restore life to those countries is a vast and complex work, in which many agencies have to co-operate,—political, industrial, social; and missionary efforts, though a blessed, are but a small part; and the Government is not the less Christian because it seeks to rule a heathen nation on principles of truth and justice only. Let us not measure this great work by the number of communicants or converts. Even when wholly detached from

Christianity, the true spirit of Christianity may animate it. The extirpation of crime, the administration of justice, the punishment of falsehood, may be regarded, without a figure of speech, as 'the word of the Lord' to a weak and deceitful people. Lessons of purity and love too flow insensibly out of improvement in the relations of social life. It is the disciple of Christ, not Christ Himself, who would forbid us to give these to the many, because we can only give the Gospel to a very few. For it is of the millions, not of the thousands, in India that we must first give an account. Our relations to the heathen are different from those of Christians in former ages, and our progress in their conversion slower. The success which attends our efforts may be disparagingly compared with that of Boniface or Augustin; but if we look a little closer, we shall see no reason to regret that Providence has placed in our hands other instruments for the spread of Christianity besides the zeal of heroes and martyrs. The power to convert multitudes by a look or a word has passed away; but God has given us another means of ameliorating the condition of mankind, by acting on their circumstances, which works extensively rather than intensively, and is in some respects safer and less liable to abuse. The mission is one of Governments rather than of Churches or individuals. And if, in carrying it out, we seem to lose sight of some of the distinctive marks of Christianity, let us not doubt that the increase of justice and mercy, the growing sense of truth, even the progress of industry, are in themselves so many steps towards the kingdom of heaven."—(Vol. ii. pp. 447, 448.)

"In dealing with classes of men, we seem to find that we have greater power to shape their circumstances than immediately to affect their wills. The voice of the preacher passes into the air; the members of his congregation are like persons 'beholding their natural face in a glass;' they go their way, forgetting their own likeness. And often the result of a long life of ministerial work has been the conversion of two or three individuals. The power which is exerted in such a case may be compared to the unaided use of the hand, while mechanical appliances are neglected. Or to turn to

another field of labour, in which the direct influence of Christianity has been hitherto small, may not the reason why the result of missions is often disappointing be found in the circumstance, that we have done little to improve the political or industrial state of those among whom our missionaries are sent? We have thought of the souls of men, and of the Spirit of God influencing them, in too naked a way; instead of attending to the complexity of human nature, and the manner in which God has ever revealed Himself in the history of mankind.

"The great lesson, which Christians have to learn in the present day, is to know the world as it is; that is to say, to know themselves as they are; human life as it is; nature as it is; history as it is. Such knowledge is also a power, to fulfil the will of God and to contribute to the happiness of man. It is a resting-place in speculation, and a new beginning in practice."—(Vol. ii. pp. 631, 632.)

CREATION.

"THAT which seems to underlie our conception both of first and final causes, is the idea of law which we see not broken or intercepted, or appearing only in particular spots of nature, but every where and in all things. All things do not equally exhibit marks of design, but all things are equally subject to the operation of law. The highest mark of intelligence pervades the whole; no one part is better than another; it is all 'very good.' The absence of design, if we like so to turn the phrase, is a part of the design. Even the less comely parts, like the plain spaces in a building, have elements of use and beauty. He who has ever thought in the most imperfect manner of the universe which modern science unveils, needs no evidence that the details of it are incapable of being framed by anything short of a Divine power. Art, and nature, and science, these three,—the first giving us the conception of the relation of parts to a whole; the second, of endless variety and intricacy, such as no art has ever attained; the third, of uniform laws which amid all the changes of created things remain fixed as at the first, reaching even to the heavens,—are the witnesses of the Creator in the external world.

"Nor can it weaken our belief in a Supreme Being, to observe that the same harmony and uniformity extend also to the actions of men. Why should it be thought a thing incredible that God should give law and order to the spiritual, no less than the natural creation? That human beings do not 'thrust or break their ranks;' that the life of nations, like that of plants or animals, has a regular growth; that the same strata or stages are observable in the religions, no less than the languages of mankind, as in the structure of the earth, are strange reasons for doubting the Providence of God. Perhaps it is even stranger, that those who do not doubt should eye with jealousy the accumulation of such facts. Do we really wish that our conceptions of God should only be on the level of the ignorant; adequate to the passing

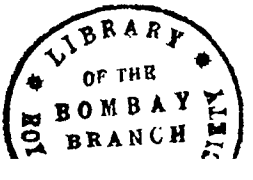
emotions of human feeling, but to reason inadequate? That Christianity is the confluence of many channels of human thought does not interfere with its Divine origin. It is not the less immediately the word of God because there have been preparations for it in all ages, and in many countries.

"The more we take out of the category of chance in the world either of nature or of mind, the more present evidence we have of the faithfulness of God. We do not need to have a chapter of accidents in life to enable us to realise the existence of a personal God, as though events which we can account for were not equally His work. Let not use or custom so prevail in our minds as to make this higher notion of God cheerless or uncomfortable to us. The rays of His presence may still warm us, as well as enlighten us. Surely He in whom we live and move and have our being is nearer to us than He would be if He interfered occasionally for our benefit.

"'The curtain of the physical world is closing in upon us:' What does this mean but that the arms of His intelligence are embracing us on every side? We have no more fear of nature; for our knowledge of the laws of nature has cast out fear. We know Him as He shows Himself in them, even as we are known of Him. Do we think to draw near to God by returning to that state in which nature seemed to be without law, when man cowered like the animals before the storm, and in the meteors of the skies and the motions of the heavenly bodies sought to read the purposes of God respecting himself? Or shall we rest in that stage of the knowledge of nature which was common to the heathen philosophers and to the Fathers of the Christian Church? or in that of two hundred years ago, ere the laws of the heavenly bodies were discovered? or of fifty years ago, before geology had established its truths on sure foundations? or of thirty years ago, ere the investigation of old language had revealed the earlier stages of the history of the human mind? At which of these resting-places shall we pause to renew the covenant between Reason and Faith? Rather at none of them, if the first condition of a true faith be the belief in all true knowledge."—(Vol. i. pp. 483—485.)

"While nature still presents to us its world of unexhausted wonders; while sin and sorrow lead us to walk by faith, and not by sight; while the soul of man departs this life knowing not whither it goes; so long will the belief endure of an Almighty Creator, from whom we came, to whom we return."—(Vol. ii. p. 485.)

"There are two witnesses (we may add in a later strain of reflection) of the being of God; the order of nature in the world, and the progress of the mind of man. He is not the order of nature, nor the progress of mind, nor both together; but that which is above and beyond them; of which they, even if conceived in a single instant, are but the external sign, the highest evidences of God which we can conceive, but not God Himself. The first to the ancient world seemed to be the work of chance, or the personal operation of one or many Divine beings. We know it to be the result of laws endless in their complexity, and yet not the less admirable for their simplicity also. The second has been regarded, even in our own day, as a series of errors capriciously invented by the ingenuity of individual men. We know it to have a law of its own, a continuous order which cannot be inverted; not to be confounded with, yet not wholly separate from, the law of nature and the will of God. Shall we doubt the world to be the creation of a Divine power, only because it is more wonderful than could have been conceived by 'them of old time;' or human reason to be in the image of God, because it too bears the marks of an overruling law or intelligence?"—(Vol. i. p. 487.)



"'THE God of peace rest upon you,' is the concluding benediction of most of the Epistles. How can He rest upon us, who draw so many hard lines of demarcation between ourselves and other men; who oppose the Church and the world, Sundays and working days, revelation and science, the past and present, the life and state of which religion speaks and the life which we ordinarily lead? . . . We are all members of the same Christian world; we are all members of the same Christian Church. Who can bear to doubt this of themselves or of their family? What parent would think otherwise of his child?—what child of his parent? Religion holds before us an ideal which we are far from reaching; natural affection softens and relieves the characters of those we love; experience alone shews men what they truly are. All these three must so meet as to do violence to none. If, in the age of the Apostles, it seemed to be the duty of the believers to separate themselves from the world and take up a hostile position, not less marked in the present age is the duty of abolishing in a Christian country what has now become an artificial distinction, and seeking by every means in our power, by fairness, by truthfulness, by knowledge, by love unfeigned, by the absence of party and prejudice, by acknowledging the good in all things, to reconcile the Church to the world, the one half of our nature to the other; drawing the mind off from speculative difficulties, or matters of party and opinion, to that which almost all equally acknowledge and almost equally rest short of—the life of Christ."—(Vol. ii. pp. 493, 494.)

"Sometimes the Church bears a high and noble witness against the world, and at other times, even to the religious mind, the balance seems to be even, and the world in its turn begins to bear witness against the Church. There are periods of history in which they both grow together." — (Vol. ii. p. 491.)

THE LAW AND FAITH.

"As the Apostle looks upon the face of the world, he sees all men, by the light of revelation in himself, returning, through Christ, into union with the God who made them. There is no distinction of Jew or Gentile, circumcision or uncircumcision. Soon he passes over into another point of view, 'setting the world in their hearts.' Two dispensations are in the bosom of every man who comes to the knowledge of the truth; these are symbolised by two words, the Law and Faith. The one is slavery, the other freedom; the one death, the other life; the one strife, the other peace; the one alienation from God, the other reconciliation with him. Not at once does the one dispensation take the place of the other. There is a period of natural life first; the Law enters and plants the seeds of mortal disease. Will and knowledge, the common sources of human action, begin to decompose, the will to evil struggling with the knowledge of good. The creature is made powerless to act by his consciousness of sin; the Law only terrifies—he dies at the very sight of it: it is a dry 'eye' turning every way upon his misery. The soul, hanging between good and evil, is in a state of paralysis, doing what it would not, and hating itself for what it does. But, again, the soul is persuaded by many arguments that 'the Law is dead;' it throws away the worser half, and clings to its risen Lord. Faith is the hand by which it is united to Him—the instrument whereby it is accepted, renewed, sanctified—the sense through which it looks up to God, revealing Himself in man, and around on creation."—(Vol. ii. pp. 32, 33.)

"In the course of the Epistle we pass more and more inward to the dividing asunder of the flesh and spirit, until darkness takes the place of light, and death of life. More than once the shadow of peace rests upon us in passing, but we must first enter into the depths of human nature, and take part in the struggle, ere we can attain finally to that rest

which is in Christ Jesus. At length the body of death slips from us: the law of the spirit of life prevails over the law of sin. And yet the fleshly body, though dead to sin, still cleaves to us: it has ceased to strive against the spirit, but is not yet adopted into the fellowship of Christ. But, though groaning within ourselves, we have the inward witness of the Spirit; we know that all things are working together for good: we ask in triumph, 'If God be for us, who can be against us?'"—(Vol. ii. pp. 33, 34.)

RIGHTEOUSNESS BY FAITH.

"THE expression 'righteousness by faith' indicates the personal character of salvation; it is not the tale of works that we do, but we ourselves who are accepted of God. Who can bear to think of his own actions as they are seen by the eye of the Almighty? Looking at their defective performance, or analysing them into the secondary motives out of which they have sprung, do we seem to have any ground on which we can stand; is there anything which satisfies ourselves? Yet, knowing that our own works cannot abide the judgment of God, we know also that His love is not proportioned to them. He is a Person who deals with us as persons over whom He has an absolute right, who have nevertheless an endless value to Him. When He might exact all, He forgives all; 'the kingdom of heaven' is like not only to a master taking account with his servants, but to a father going out to meet his returning son. The symbol and mean of this personal relation of man to God is faith; and the righteousness which consists not in what we do, but in what we are, is the righteousness of faith.

"Faith may be spoken of in the language of the Epistle to the Hebrews, as the substance of things unseen. But what are the things unseen? Not only an invisible world ready to flash through the material at the appearance of Christ; not angels, or powers of darkness, or even God Himself 'sitting,' as the Old Testament described, 'on the circle of the heavens;' but the kingdom of truth and justice, the things that are within, of which God is the centre, and with which men everywhere by faith hold communion. Faith is the belief in the existence of this kingdom; that is, in the truth and justice and mercy of God, who disposes all things—not, perhaps, in our judgment, for the greatest happiness of His creatures, but absolutely in accordance with our moral notions. And that this is not seen to be the case here, makes it a matter of faith that it will be so in some way that

we do not at present comprehend. He that believes on God believes, first, that He is; and, secondly, that He is the Rewarder of them that seek Him.

"Now, if we go on to ask what gives this assurance of the truth and justice of God, the answer is, the life and death of Christ, who is the Son of God, and the Revelation of God. We know what He Himself has told us of God, and we cannot conceive perfect goodness separate from perfect truth; nay, this good itself is the only conception we can form of God, if we confess what the mere immensity of the material world tends to suggest, that the Almighty is not a natural or even a supernatural power, but a Being of whom the reason and conscience of man have a truer conception than imagination in its highest flights. He is not in the storm, nor in the thunder, nor in the earthquake, but 'in the still small voice.' And this image of God as He reveals Himself in the heart of man is 'Christ in us the hope of glory;' Christ as He once was upon earth in His sufferings rather than His miracles,—the image of goodness and truth, and peace and love."—(Vol. ii. pp. 541—543.)

"In the Epistles of St. Paul, and yet more in the Epistle to the Hebrews, the relation of Christ to mankind is expressed under figures of speech taken from the Mosaic dispensation: He is the Sacrifice for the sins of men, 'the Lamb of God that taketh away the sins of the world;' the Antitype of all the types, the fulfilment in His own person of the Jewish law. Such words may give comfort to those who think of God under human imagery, but they seem to require explanation when we rise to the contemplation of Him as the God of truth, without parts or passions, who knows all things, and cannot be angry with any, or see them other than they truly are. What is indicated by them, to us 'who are dead to the law,' is, that God has manifested Himself in Christ as the God of mercy; who is more ready to hear than we to pray; who has forgiven us almost before we ask Him; who has given us His only Son, and how will He not with Him also give us all things? They intimate, on God's part, that He is not extreme to mark what is done amiss; in human language, 'He is touched with the feeling of our in-

firmities;' on our part, that we say to God, 'Not of ourselves, but of Thy grace and mercy, O Lord.' Not in fulness of life and health, nor in the midst of business, nor in the schools of theology; but in the sick chamber, where are no more earthly interests, and in the hour of death, we have before us the living image of the truth of justification by faith, when man acknowledges, on the confines of another world, the unprofitableness of his own good deeds, and the goodness of God even in afflicting him, and his absolute reliance not on works of righteousness that he has done, but on the Divine mercy.

"A true faith has been sometimes defined to be not a faith in the unseen merely, or in God or Christ, but a personal assurance of salvation. Such a feeling may be only the veil of sensualism; it may be also the noble confidence of St. Paul. 'I am persuaded that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.' It may be an emotion, resting on no other ground except that we believe; or, a conviction deeply rooted in our life and character. Scripture and reason alike seem to require this belief in our salvation: and yet to assume that we are at the end of the race may make us lag in our course. Whatever danger there is in the doctrine of the Divine decrees, the danger is nearer home, and more liable to influence practice, when our faith takes the form of personal assurance. How, then, are we to escape from the dilemma, and have a rational confidence in the mercy of God?

"This confidence must rest, first, on a sense of the truth and justice of God, rising above perplexities of fact in the world around us, or the tangle of metaphysical or theological difficulties. But although such a sense of the truth or justice of God is the beginning of our peace, yet a link of connexion is wanting before we can venture to apply to ourselves that which we acknowledge in the abstract. The justice of God may lead to our condemnation as well as to our justification. Are we then, in the language of the ancient tragedy, to say that no one can be counted happy before he dies, or that salvation is only granted when the end of our

course is seen? Not so; the Gospel encourages us to regard ourselves, as already saved; for we have communion with Christ and appropriate His work by faith. And this appropriation means nothing short of the renunciation of self and the taking up of the cross of Christ in daily life. Whether such an imitation or appropriation of Christ is illusive or real,—a new mould of nature or only an outward and superficial impression, is a question not to be answered by any further theological distinction but by an honest and good heart searching into itself. Then only, when we surrender ourselves into the hands of God, when we ask Him to show us to ourselves as we truly are, when we allow ourselves in no sin, when we attribute nothing to our own merits, when we test our faith, not by the sincerity of an hour, but of months and years, we learn the true meaning of that word in which, better than any other, the nature of righteousnesss by faith is summed up,—peace.

"'And now abideth faith, hope, and love, these three; but the greatest of these is love.' There seems to be a contradiction in love being the 'greatest,' when faith is the medium of acceptance. Love, according to some, is preferred to faith, because it reaches to another life; when faith and hope are swallowed up in sight, love remains still. Love, according to others, has the first place, because it is Divine as well as human; it is the love of God to man, as well as of man to God. Perhaps, the order of precedence is sufficiently explained by the occasion; to a Church torn by divisions the Apostle says, 'that the first of Christian graces is love.' Another thought, however, is suggested by these words, which has a bearing on our present subject. It is this, that in using the received terms of theology, we must also acknowledge their relative and transient character. Christian truth has many modes of statement; love is the more natural expression to St. John, faith to St. Paul. The indwelling of Christ or of the Spirit of God, grace, faith, hope, love, are not parts of a system, but powers or aspects of the Christian life. Human minds are different, and the same mind is not the same at different times; and the best of men now-a-days have but a feeble consciousness of spiritual truths. We ought not to dim that consciousness by insisting on a single for-

mula; and therefore while speaking of faith as the instrument of justification, because faith indicates the apprehensive, dependent character of the believer's relation to Christ, we are bound also to deny that the Gospel is contained in any word, or the Christian life inseparably linked to any one quality. We must acknowledge the imperfection of language and thought, and seek rather to describe than to define the work of God in the soul, which has as many forms as the tempers, capacities, circumstances, and accidents of our nature."—(Vol. ii. pp. 543—546.)

DIVERSITIES OF RELIGIOUS CHARACTER.

"THE gifts of God to man have ever some reference to natural disposition. He who becomes the servant of God does not thereby cease to be himself. Often the transition is greater in appearance than in reality, from the suddenness of its manifestation. There is a kind of rebellion against self and nature and God, which, through the mercy of God to the soul, seems almost necessarily to lead to re-action. Persons have been worse than their fellow-men in outward appearance, and yet there was within them the spirit of a child waiting to return home to their father's house. A change passes upon them which we may figure to ourselves, not only as the new man taking the place of the old, but as the inner man taking the place of the outer. So complex is human nature, that the very opposite to what we are has often an inexpressible power over us. Contrast is not only a law of association: it is also a principle of action. Many run from one extreme to another, from licentiousness to the ecstacy of religious feeling, from religious feeling back to licentiousness, not without a 'fearful looking for of judgment.' If we could trace the hidden workings of good and evil, they would appear far less surprising and more natural than as they are seen by the outward eye. Our spiritual nature is without spring or chasm, but it has a certain play or freedom which leads very often to consequences the opposite of what we expect. It seems in some instances as if the same religious education had tended to contrary results; in one case to a devout life, in another to a re-action against it; sometimes to one form of faith, at other times to another. Many parents have wept to see the early religious training of their children draw them, by a kind of repulsion, to a communion or mode of opinion which is the extreme opposite of that in which they have been brought up. Let them have peace in the thought that it was not always in

their power to fulfil the duty in which they seem to themselves to have failed. These reflections serve to make us think that all spiritual influences, however antagonistic they may appear, have more in common with each other than they have with the temper of the world; and that it is easier to pass from one form of faith to another than from leading the life of all men to either. There is more in common between those who anathematize each other than between either and the spirit of toleration which characterises the ordinary dealings of man and man, or much more the spirit of Christ, for whom they are alike contending.

"Perhaps we shall not be far wrong in concluding, that those who have undergone great religious changes have been of a fervid imaginative cast of mind; looking for more in this world than it was capable of yielding; easily touched by the remembrance of the past, or inspired by some ideal of the future. When with this has been combined a zeal for the good of their fellow-men, they have become the heralds and champions of the religious movements of the world. The change has begun within, but has overflowed without them. 'When thou art converted, strengthen thy brethren,' is the order of nature and of grace. In secret they brood over their own state; weary and profitless their soul fainteth within them. The religion they profess is a religion not of life to them, but of death; they lose their interest in the world, and are cut off from the communion of their fellow-creatures. While they are musing, the fire kindles, and at the last—'they speak with their tongue.' Then pours forth irrepressibly the pent-up stream—'unto all and upon all' their fellow-men: the intense flame of inward enthusiasm warms and lights up the world. First they are the evidence to others; then, again, others are the evidence to them. All religious leaders cannot be reduced to a single type of character; yet in all, perhaps, two characteristics may be observed; the first, great self-reflection; the second, intense sympathy with other men. They are not the creatures of habit or of circumstances, leading a blind life, unconscious of what they are; their whole effort is to realize their inward nature, and to make it palpable and visible to their

fellows. Unlike other men who are confined to the circle of themselves or of their family, their affections are never straitened; they embrace with their love all men who are like-minded with them, almost all men too who are unlike them, in the hope that they may become like."—(Vol. i. pp. 354—356.)

ELECTION.

"In the Old Testament the only election of individuals is that of the great leaders or chiefs, who are identified with the nation. But in the New Testament, where religion has become a personal and individual matter, it follows that election must also be of persons. The Jewish nation knew, or seemed to know, one fact, that they were the chosen people. They saw, also, eminent men raised up by the hand of God to be the deliverers of His servants. It is not in this 'historical' way that the Christian becomes conscious of his individual election. From within, not from without, he is made aware of the purpose of God respecting himself. Living in close and intimate union with God, having the mind of the Spirit and knowing the things of the Spirit, he begins to consider with St. Paul, 'When it pleased God, who separated me from my mother's womb, to reveal His Son in me.' His whole life seems a sort of miracle to him; supernatural, and beyond other men's in the gifts of grace which he has received. If he asks himself, 'Whence was this to me?' he finds no other answer but that God gave them 'because He had a favour unto him.' He recalls the hour of his conversion, when, in a moment, he was changed from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God. Or, perhaps, the dealings of God with him have been insensible, yet not the less real; like a child, he cannot remember the time when he first began to trust the love of his parent. How can he separate himself from that love or refuse to believe that He who began the good work will also accomplish it unto the end? At which step in the ladder of God's mercy will he stop? 'Whom He did foreknow, them He did predestinate; whom He did predestinate, them He also called; whom He called, them He justified? whom He justified, them He also glorified.'

"A religious mind feels the difference between saying, 'God chose me; I cannot tell why; not for any good that I have done; and I am persuaded that He will keep me unto

the end;' and saying, 'God chooses men quite irrespective of their actions, and predestines them to eternal salvation;' and yet more, if we add the other half of the doctrine, 'God refuses men quite irrespective of their actions, and they become reprobates, predestined to everlasting damnation.' Could we be willing to return to that stage of the doctrine which St. Paul taught, without comparing contradictory statements or drawing out logical conclusions,—could we be content to rest our belief, as some of the greatest, even of Calvinistic divines have done, on fact and experience, theology would be no longer at variance with morality.

"'Work out your own salvation with fear and trembling; for it is God that worketh in you both to do and to will of His good pleasure,' is the language of Scripture, adjusting the opposite aspects of this question. The Arminian would say, 'Work out your own salvation;' the Calvinist, 'God worketh in you both to do and to will of His good pleasure.' However contradictory it may sound, the Scripture unites both; work out your own salvation with fear and trembling; for it is God that worketh in you both to will and to do of His good pleasure."—(Vol. ii. pp. 609, 610.)

LIBRARY OF THE BOMBAY BRANCH OF THE ROYAL ASIATIC SOCIETY

THE ATONEMENT.

"ALL, or almost all, Christians would agree that in some sense or other we are reconciled to God through Christ; whether by the atonement and satisfaction which He made to God for us, or by His manifestation of the justice of God or love of God in the world, by the passive obedience of His death or the active obedience of His life, by the imputation of His righteousness to us or by our identity and communion with Him, or likeness to Him, or love of Him; in some one of these senses, which easily pass into each other, all would join in saying that 'He is the way, the truth, and the life.' And had the human mind the same power of holding fast points of agreement as of discerning differences, there would be an end of the controversy.

"We can live and die in the language of St. Paul and St. John; there is nothing there repugnant to our moral sense. We have a yet higher authority in the words of Christ Himself. Only in repeating and elucidating these statements, we must remember that Scripture phraseology is of two kinds, simple and figurative, and that the first is the interpretation of the second. We must not bring the New Testament into bondage to the Old, but ennoble and transfigure the Old by the New.

"First; the death of Christ may be described as a sacrifice. But what sacrifice? Not 'the blood of bulls and of goats, nor the ashes of an heifer sprinkling the unclean,' but the living sacrifice 'to do Thy will, O God.' It is a sacrifice which is the negation of sacrifice; 'Christ the end of the law to them that believe.' Peradventure, in a heathen country, to put an end to the rite of sacrifice 'some one would even dare to die;' that expresses the relation in which the offering on Mount Calvary stands to the Levitical offerings. It is the death of what is outward and local, the life of what is inward and spiritual: 'I, if I be lifted up from the earth, shall draw all men after Me;' and 'Neither in this mountain nor at Jerusalem shall ye worship the Father.' It is the offering up of the old world on the cross; the law with its handwriting of

ordinances, the former man with his affections and lusts, the body of sin with its remembrances of past sin. It is the New Testament revealed in the blood of Christ, the Gospel of freedom, which draws men together in the communion of one spirit, as in St. Paul's time without respect of persons and nations, so in our own day without regard to the divisions of Christendom. In the place of Churches, priesthoods, ceremonials, systems, it puts a moral and spiritual principle which works with them, not necessarily in opposition to them, but beside or within them, to renew life in the individual soul.

"Again, the death of Christ may be described as a ransom. It is not that God needs some payment which He must receive before He will set the captives free. The ransom is not a human ransom, any more than the sacrifice is a Levitical sacrifice. Rightly to comprehend the nature of this Divine ransom, we must begin with that question of the Apostle: 'Know ye not that whose servants ye yield yourselves to obey, his servants ye are to whom ye obey, whether of sin unto death, or of obedience unto righteousness?' There are those who will reply: 'We were never in bondage at any time.' To whom Christ answers: 'Whosoever committeth sin is the servant of sin;' and, 'If the Son shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed.' Ransom is 'deliverance to the captive.' There are mixed modes here also, as in the use of the term sacrifice—the word has a temporary allusive reference to a Mosaical figure of speech. That secondary allusive reference we are constrained to drop, because it is unessential; and also because it immediately involves further questions—a ransom to whom? for what?—about which Scripture is silent, to which reason refuses to answer.

"Thirdly, the death of Christ is spoken of as a death for us, or for our sins. The ambiguous use of the preposition 'for,' combined with the figure of sacrifice, has tended to introduce the idea of substitution; when the real meaning is not 'in our stead,' but only 'in behalf of,' or 'because of us.' It is a great assumption, or an unfair deduction, from such expressions, to say that Christ takes our place, or that the Father in looking at the sinner sees only Christ. Christ died for us in no other sense than He lived or rose again for

us. Scripture affords no hint of His taking our place in His death in any other way than He did also in His life. He Himself speaks of His 'decease which He should accomplish at Jerusalem,' quite simply: 'greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends.' The words of Caiaphas, 'It is expedient that one man should die for this nation,' and the comment of the Evangelist, 'and not for that nation only, but that He should gather together in one the children of God that are scattered abroad,' afford a measure of the meaning of such expressions. Here, too, there are mixed modes which seem to be inextricably blended in the language of Scripture, and which theology has not always distinguished. For the thing signified is, partly, that Christ died for our sakes, partly that He died by the hands of sinners, partly that He died with a perfect and Divine sympathy for human evil and suffering. But this ambiguity (which we may silently correct or explain) need not prevent our joining in words which, more perhaps than any others, have been consecrated by religious use to express the love and affection of Christians towards their Lord.

"Everywhere St. Paul speaks of the Christian as one with Christ. He is united with Him, not in His death only, but in all the stages of His existence; living with Him, suffering with Him, crucified with Him, buried with Him, rising again with Him, renewed in His image, glorified together with Him; these are the expressions by which this union is denoted. There is something meant by this language which goes beyond the experience of ordinary Christians, something, perhaps, more mystical than in these latter days of the world most persons seem to be capable of feeling, yet the main thing signified is the same for all ages, the knowledge and love of Christ, by which men pass out of themselves to make their will His and His theirs, the consciousness of Him in their thoughts and actions, communion with Him, and trust in Him. Of every act of kindness or good which they do to others His life is the type; of every act of devotion or self-denial His death is the type; of every act of faith His resurrection is the type. And often they walk with Him on earth, not in a figure only, and find Him near them, not in a figure only, in the valley of death. They experience from

Him the same kind of support as from the sympathy and communion of an earthly friend. That friend is also a Divine power. In proportion as they become like Him, they are reconciled to God through Him; they pass with Him into the relationship of sons of God. There is enough here for faith to think of, without sullying the mirror of God's justice, or overclouding His truth. We need not suppose that God ever sees us other than we really are, or attributes to us what we never did. Doctrinal statements, in which the nature of the work of Christ is most exactly defined, cannot really afford the same support as the simple conviction of His love.

"Again, the import of the death of Christ may be interpreted by His life. No theological speculation can throw an equal light on it. From the other side we cannot see it, but only from this. Now the life of Christ is the life of One who knew no sin, on whom the shadow of evil never passed; who went about doing good: who had not where to lay His head; whose condition was in all respects the reverse of earthly and human greatness; who also had a sort of infinite sympathy or communion with all men everywhere; whom, nevertheless, His own nation betrayed to a shameful death. It is the life of One who came to bear witness of the truth, who knew what was in man, and never spared to rebuke him, yet condemned him not; Himself without sin, yet One to whom all men would soonest have gone to confess and receive forgiveness of sin. It is the life of One who was in constant communion with God as well as man; who was the inhabitant of another world while outwardly in this. It is the life of One in whom we see balanced and united the separate gifts and graces of which we catch glimpses only in the lives of His followers. It is a life which is mysterious to us, which we forbear to praise, in the earthly sense, because it is above praise, being the most perfect image and embodiment that we can conceive of Divine goodness.

"And the death of Christ is the fulfilment and consummation of His life, the greatest moral act ever done in this world, the highest manifestation of perfect love, the centre in which the rays of love converge and meet, the extremest abnegation or annihilation of self. It is the death of One

who seals with His blood the witness of the truth which He came into the world to teach, which therefore confirms our faith in Him as well as animates our love. It is the death of One, who says at the last hour, 'Of them that Thou gavest me, I have not lost one,'—of One who, having come forth from God, and having finished the work which He came into the world to do, returns to God. It is a death in which all the separate gifts of heroes and martyrs are united in a Divine excellence,—of One who most perfectly foresaw all things that were coming upon Him—who felt all, and shrank not,—of One who, in the hour of death, set the example to His followers of praying for His enemies. It is a death which, more even than His life, is singular and mysterious, in which nevertheless we all are partakers,—in which there was the thought and consciousness of mankind to the end of time, which has also the power of drawing to itself the thoughts of men to the end of time.

"Lastly, there is a true Christian feeling in many other ways of regarding the salvation of man, of which the heart is its own witness, which yet admit, still less than the preceding, of logical rule and precision. He who is conscious of his own infirmity and sinfulness, is ready to confess that he needs reconciliation with God. He has no proud thoughts: he knows that he is saved 'not of himself, it is the gift of God;' the better he is, the more he feels, in the language of Scripture, 'that he is an unprofitable servant.' Sometimes he imagines the Father 'coming out to meet him, when he is yet a long way off,' as in the parable of the Prodigal Son; at other times the burden of sin lies heavy on him; he seems to need more support—he can approach God only through Christ. All men are not the same; one has more of the strength of reason in his religion; another more of the tenderness of feeling. With some, faith partakes of the nature of a pure and spiritual morality; there are others who have gone through the struggle of St. Paul or Luther, and attain rest only in casting all on Christ. One will live after the pattern of the Sermon on the Mount, or the Epistle of St. James. Another finds a deep consolation and meaning in a closer union with Christ; he will 'put on Christ,' he will hide himself in Christ; he will experience in his own person

the truth of those words of the Apostle, 'I am crucified with Christ, nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me.' But if he have the spirit of moderation that there was in St. Paul, he will not stereotype these true, though often passing feelings, in any formula of substitution or satisfaction; still less will he draw out formulas of this sort into remote consequences. Such logical idealism is of another age; it is neither faith nor philosophy in this. Least of all will he judge others by the circumstance of their admitting or refusing to admit the expression of his individual feelings as an eternal truth. He shrinks from asserting his own righteousness; he is equally unwilling to affirm that the righteousness of Christ is imputed to him. He is looking for forgiveness of sins, not because Christ has satisfied the wrath of God, but because God can show mercy without satisfaction: he may have no right to acquittal, he dare not say, God has no right to acquit. Yet again, he is very far from imagining that the most merciful God will indiscriminately forgive; or that the weakness of human emotions, groaning out at the last hour a few accustomed phrases, is a sufficient ground of confidence and hope. He knows that the only external evidence of forgiveness is the fact, that he has ceased to do evil; no other is possible. Having Christ near as a friend and a brother, and making the Christian life his great aim, he is no longer under the dominion of a conventional theology. He will not be distracted by its phrases from communion with his fellow-men. He can never fall into that confusion of head and heart, which elevates matters of opinion into practical principles. Difficulties and doubts diminish with him, as he himself grows more like Christ, not because he forcibly suppresses them, but because they become unimportant in comparison with purity, and holiness, and love. Enough of truth for him seems to radiate from the person of the Saviour. He thinks more and more of the human nature of Christ as the expression of the divine. He has found the way of life;—that way is not an easy way—but neither is it beset by the imaginary perplexities with which a false use of the intellect in religion has often surrounded it.

"If our Saviour were to come again to earth, which of all

110715

the theories of atonement and sacrifice would He sanction with His authority? Perhaps none of them, yet perhaps all may be consistent with a true service of Him. The question has no answer. But it suggests the thought that we shrink from bringing controversy into His presence. The same kind of lesson may be gathered from the consideration of theological differences in the face of death. Who, as he draws near to Christ, will not feel himself drawn towards his theological opponents? At the end of life, when a man looks back calmly, he is most likely to find that he exaggerated in some things; that he mistook party spirit for a love of truth. Perhaps, he had not sufficient consideration for others, or stated the truth itself in a manner which was calculated to give offence. In the heat of the struggle, let us at least pause to imagine polemical disputes as they will appear a year, two years, three years hence; it may be, dead and gone—certainly more truly seen than in the hour of controversy. For the truths about which we are disputing cannot partake of the passing stir; they do not change even with the greater revolutions of human things. They are in eternity; and the image of them on earth is not the movement on the surface of the waters, but the depths of the silent sea. Lastly, as a measure of the value of such disputes, which above all other interests seem to have for a time the power of absorbing men's minds and rousing their passions, we may carry our thoughts onwards to the invisible world, and there behold, as in a glass, the great theological teachers of past ages, who have anathematized each other in their lives, resting together in the communion of the same Lord."—(Vol. ii. pp. 587—595.)

THE WORDS OF CHRIST.

"THERE is no study of theology which is likely to exercise a more elevating influence on the individual, or a more healing one on divisions of opinion, than the study of the words of Christ Himself. The heart is its own witness to them; all Christian sects acknowledge them; they seem to escape or rise above the region or atmosphere of controversy. The form in which they exhibit the Gospel to us is the simplest and also the deepest; they are more free from details than any other part of Scripture, and they are absolutely independent of personal and national influences. In them is contained the expression of the inner life, of mankind, and of the Church; there, too, the individual beholds, as in a glass, the image of a goodness which is not of this world. To rank their authority below that of Apostles and Evangelists is to give up the best hope of reuniting Christendom in itself, and of making Christianity a universal religion."—(Vol. ii. p. 556.)

LIBRARY OF THE BOMBAY BRANCH OF THE ROYAL ASIATIC SOCIETY

UNITY OF THE OLD AND NEW TESTAMENTS.

"A REAL unity remains to ourselves as well as to the Apostle, the unity not of the letter, but of the spirit, like the unity of life or of a human soul, which lasts on amid the changes of our being. The Old Testament and the New do not dovetail into one another like the parts of an indenture; it is a higher figure than this, which is needed to describe the continuity of the Divine work. Or rather, the simple fact is above all figures, and can receive no addition from philosophical notions of design, or the observation of minute coincidences. What we term the Old and New dispensation is the increasing revelation of God, amid the accidents of human history: first, in Himself; secondly, in His Son, gathering not one nation only, but all mankind into His family. It is the vision of God Himself, true and just, and remembering mercy in one age of the world; not ceasing to be true and just, but softening also into human gentleness, and love, and forgiveness, and making his dwelling in the human heart in another. The wind, and the earthquake, and the fire pass by first, and after that 'the still small voice. This is the great fulfilment of the Law and the Prophets in the Gospel. No other religion has anything like it. And the use of language, and systems of theology, and the necessity of 'giving ideas through something,' and the prayers and thoughts of eighteen hundred years, have formed another connexion between the Old and New Testament, more accidental and outward, and also more intricate and complex, which is incapable of being accurately drawn out, and ought not to be imposed as an article of faith; which yet seems to many to supply a want in human nature, and gives expression to feelings which would otherwise be unuttered."—(Vol. ii. p. 158.)

SCRIPTURE.

"It is often supposed that, if the evidence of the genuineness of a single book of Scripture be weakened, or the credit of a single chapter shaken, the whole is overthrown. Sometimes the danger of losing the whole is made an argument against criticism of any part. Much more true is it that, in short portions or single verses of Scripture the whole is contained. Had we but one discourse of Christ, one Epistle of Paul, more than half would have been preserved. There is a story of a solitary of the desert, who came into the city of Alexandria and carried back with him a text of Scripture, refusing afterwards to learn another, because he could never completely practise the first. The story belongs to another age; it may still be applied by those who interpret a doubt respecting the least portion of Scripture into a denial of the Christian faith."—(Vol. i. p. 400.)

"The writings of the Apostle, like the words of our Saviour, are but a fragment of his life. And they must be restored to their context before they can be truly understood. They do not acquire any real sacredness by isolation from the rest. It would be a loss, not a gain, to deprive the New Testament of its natural human character,—instead of receiving a higher and diviner meaning, it would only be reduced to a level with the sacred writings of the Asiatic religions. 'So Christ and his Apostles went about speaking day after day,' is a truer and more instructive thought than 'these things were formally set down for our instruction.' Nor does it really diminish the power of Scripture to describe it, as it appears to the eye of the critical student, as a collection of fragmentary and occasional pieces. For these fragments are living plants; the germ of eternal life is in them all; the least of all seeds, when compared in bulk with human literature, they have grown up into a tree, the shade of which covers the earth."—(Vol. i. p. 201.)

"Natural theology speaks clearly, but it is of God only; moral philosophy speaks clearly, but it is of man only: but the Gospel is, as it were, the communion of God and man, and its ideas are in a state of transition or oscillation, having two aspects towards God and towards man, which it is hard to keep in view at once. Thus, to quote once more the example just given, the righteousness of God is an idea not difficult to us to comprehend, human justice and goodness are also intelligible; but to conceive justice or righteousness as passing from heaven to earth, from God to man, *actu et potentiâ* at once, as a sort of life, or stream, or motion, is perplexing. And yet this notion of the communion of the righteousness of God being what constitutes righteousness, is of the very essence of the Gospel. It was what the Apostle and the first believers meant and felt, and what, if we could get the simple unlettered Christian, receiving the Gospel as a little child, to describe to us his feelings, he would describe."—(Vol. ii. p. 105.)

SCRIPTURE.

"In what relation does Scripture stand to actual life? Is it a law, or only a spirit? for nations, or for individuals? to be enforced generally, or in details also? Are its maxims to be modified by experience, or acted upon in defiance of experience? Are the accidental circumstances of the first believers to become a rule for us? Is everything, in short, done or said by our Saviour and His Apostles, to be regarded as a precept or example which is to be followed on all occasions and to last for all time? That can hardly be, consistently with the changes of human things. It would be a rigid skeleton of Christianity (not the image of Christ), to which society and politics, as well as the lives of individuals, would be conformed. It would be the oldness of the letter on which the world would be stretched; not 'the law of the spirit of life,' which St. Paul teaches. The attempt to force politics and law into the framework of religion is apt to drive us up into a corner, in which the great principles of truth and justice have no longer room to make themselves felt. It is better, as well as safer, to take the liberty with which Christ has made us free. For our Lord Himself has left behind Him words which contain a principle large enough to admit all the forms of a society or of life; 'My kingdom is not of this world.' (John xviii. 36.) It does not come into collision with politics or knowledge; it has nothing to do with the Roman government or the Jewish priesthood, or with corresponding institutions in the present day: it is a counsel of perfection, and has its dwelling-place in the heart of man. That is the real solution of questions of Church and State; all else is relative to the history or circumstances of particular nations. That is the answer to a doubt which is also raised respecting the obligation of the letter of the Gospel on individual Christians. But this inwardness of the words of Christ is what few are able to receive; it is easier to apply them superficially to things without than to be a partaker of them from within. And false and miserable applications of them are often made, and the kingdom of God becomes the

tool of the kingdoms of the world."—(*Essays and Reviews*, pp. 357, 358.)

"In many of our Lord's discourses He speaks of the 'blessedness of poverty:' of the hardness which they that have riches will experience 'in attaining eternal life.' 'It is easier for a camel to go through a needle's eye,' and 'Son, thou in thy lifetime receivedst thy good things,' and again, 'One thing thou lackest, go and sell all that thou hast.' Precepts like these do not appeal to our own experience of life; they are unlike anything that we see around us at the present day, even among good men; to some among us they will recall the remarkable saying of Lessing,—'that the Christian religion had been tried for eighteen centuries; the religion of Christ remained to be tried.' To take them literally would be injurious to ourselves and to society (at least, so we think)'.... Well then, are the precepts of Christ not to be obeyed? Perhaps in their fullest sense they cannot be obeyed. But at any rate they are not to be explained away; the standard of Christ is not to be lowered to ordinary Christian life, because ordinary Christian life cannot rise, even in good men, to the standard of Christ. And there may be 'standing among us' some one in ten thousand 'whom we know not,' in whom there is such a divine union of charity and prudence that he is most blest in the entire fulfilment of the precept, 'Go, sell all that thou hast,'—which to obey literally in other cases would be evil, and not good. Many there have been, doubtless (not one or two only) who have given all that they had on earth to their family or friends—the poor servant 'casting her two mites into the treasury,' denying herself the ordinary comforts of life for the sake of an erring parent or brother; that is not probably an uncommon case, and as near an approach as in this life we make to heaven. And there may be some one or two rare natures in the world in which there is such a divine courtesy, such a gentleness and dignity of soul, that differences of rank seem to vanish before them, and they look upon the face of others, even of their own servants and dependants, only as they are in the sight of God and will be in His kingdom. And there may be some tender and delicate woman among us, who feels that she has a divine vocation to fulfil the most

repulsive offices towards the dying inmates of a hospital, or the soldier perishing in a foreign land. Whether such examples of self-sacrifice are good or evil, must depend, not altogether on social or economical principles, but on the spirit of those who offer them, and the power which they have in themselves of 'making all things kin.' And even if the ideal itself were not carried out by us in practice, it has nevertheless what may be termed a truth of feeling. 'Let them that have riches be as though they had them not.' 'Let the rich man wear the load lightly; he will one day fold them up as a vesture.' Let not the refinement of society make us forget that it is not the refined only who are received into the kingdom of God; nor the daintiness of life hide from us the bodily evils of which the rich man and Lazarus are alike heirs. Thoughts such as these have the power to re-unite us to our fellow-creatures from whom the accidents of birth, position, wealth have separated us; they soften our hearts towards them, when divided not only by vice and ignorance, but what is even a greater barrier, difference of manners and associations. For if there be anything in our own fortune superior to that of others, instead of idolizing it or cherishing it in the blood, the Gospel would have us cast it from us; and if there be anything mean or despised in those with whom we have to do, the Gospel would have us regard such as friends and brethren, yea, even as having the person of Christ."—(pp. 361—364.)

"There are notes struck in places of Scripture, which like some discoveries of science, have sounded before their time; and only after many days have been caught up and found a response on the earth. They are germs of truth which after thousands of years have never yet taken root in the world. There are lessons in the Prophets which, however simple, mankind have not yet learned even in theory; and which the complexity of society rather tends to hide; aspects of human life in Job and Ecclesiastes which have a truth of desolation about them which we faintly realize in ordinary circumstances. It is, perhaps, the greatest difficulty of all to enter into the meaning of the words of Christ—so gentle, so human, so divine, neither adding to them nor

marring their simplicity. The attempt to illustrate or draw them out in detail, even to guard against their abuse, is apt to disturb the balance of truth. The interpreter needs nothing short of 'fashioning' in himself the image of the mind of Christ. He has to be born again into a new spiritual or intellectual world, from which the thoughts of this world are shut out. It is one of the highest tasks on which the labour of a life can be spent, to bring the words of Christ a little nearer the heart of man."—(pp. 379, 380.)

"Nothing that can be said of the greatness or sublimity, or truth, or depth, or tenderness, of many passages, is too much. But that greatness is of a simple kind; it is not increased by double senses, or systems of types, or elaborate structure, or design. If every sentence was a mystery, every word a riddle, every letter a symbol, that would not make the Scriptures more worthy of a Divine author: it is a heathenish or Rabbinical fancy which reads them in this way. Such complexity would not place them above but below human compositions in general; for it would deprive them of the ordinary intelligibleness of human language. It is not for a Christian theologian to say that words were given to mankind to conceal their thoughts, neither was revelation given them to conceal the Divine."—(p. 382.)

"In this consideration of the separate books of Scripture it is not to be forgotten that they have also a sort of continuity. We make a separate study of the subject, the mode of thought, in some degree also of the language of each book. And at length the idea arises in our minds of a common literature, a pervading life, and overruling law. It may be compared to the effect of some natural scene in which we suddenly perceive a harmony or picture, or to the imperfect appearance of design which suggests itself in looking at the surface of the globe. That is to say, there is nothing miraculous or artificial in the arrangement of the books of Scripture; it is the result, not the design, which appears in them when bound in the same volume. Or if we like so to say, there *is* design, but a natural design which is revealed to after ages. Such continuity or design is best expressed

under some notion of progress or growth, not regular, however, but with broken and imperfect stages, which the want of knowledge prevents our minutely defining. The great truth of the unity of God was there from the first; slowly as the morning broke in the heavens, like some central light, it filled and afterwards dispersed the mists of human passion in which it was itself enveloped. A change passes over the Jewish religion from fear to love, from power to wisdom, from the justice of God to the mercy of God, from the nation to the individual, from this world to another; from the visitation of the sins of the fathers upon the children, to 'every soul shall bear its own iniquity;' from the fire, the earthquake, and the storm, to the still small voice. There never was a time after the deliverance from Egypt, in which the Jewish people did not bear a kind of witness against the cruelty and licentiousness of the surrounding tribes. In the decline of the monarchy, as the kingdom itself was sinking under foreign conquerors, whether springing from contact with the outer world, or from some reaction within, the undergrowth of morality gathers strength; first, in the anticipation of prophecy, secondly, like a green plant in the hollow rind of Pharisaism,—and individuals pray and commune with God each one for himself. At length the tree of life blossoms; the faith in immortality which had hitherto slumbered in the heart of man, intimated only in doubtful words (2 Sam. xii. 23; Psalm xvii. 15), or beaming for an instant in dark places (Job xix. 25), has become the prevailing belief."—(pp. 384—386.)

"In an age which was the victim of its own passions, the creature of its own circumstances, the slave of its own degenerate religion, our Saviour taught a lesson absolutely free from all the influences of a surrounding world. He made the last perfect revelation of God to man; a revelation not indeed immediately applicable to the state of society or the world, but in its truth and purity inexhaustible by the after generations of men. And of the first application of the truth which He taught as a counsel of perfection to the actual circumstances of mankind, we have the example in the Epistles.

"Such a general conception of growth or development in Scripture, beginning with the truth of the Unity of God in the earliest books and ending with the perfection of Christ, naturally springs up in our minds in the perusal of the sacred writings. It is a notion of value to the interpreter, for it enables him at the same time to grasp the whole and distinguish the parts. It saves him from the necessity of maintaining that the Old Testament is one and the same everywhere; that the books of Moses contain truths or precepts, such as the duty of prayer or the faith in immortality, or the spiritual interpretation of sacrifice, which no one has ever seen there. It leaves him room enough to admit all the facts of the case. No longer is he required to defend or to explain away David's imprecations against his enemies, or his injunctions to Solomon, any more than his sin in the matter of Uriah. Nor is he hampered with a theory of accommodation. Still the sense of 'the increasing purpose which through the ages ran' is present to him, nowhere else continuously discernible or ending in a divine perfection. Nowhere else is there found the same interpenetration of the political and religious element—a whole nation, 'though never good for much at any time,' possessed with the conviction that it was living in the face of God—in whom the Sun of righteousness shone upon the corruption of an Eastern nature—the 'fewest of all people,' yet bearing the greatest part in the education of the world. Nowhere else among the teachers and benefactors of mankind is there any form like His, in whom the desire of the nation is fulfilled, and 'not of that nation only,' but of all mankind, whom He restores to His Father and their Father, to His God and their God."—(pp. 386, 387.)

"Interpretation is the province of few; it requires a finer perception of language, and a higher degree of cultivation than is attained by the majority of mankind. But applications are made by all, from the philosopher reading 'God in History,' to the poor woman who finds in them a response to her prayers, and the solace of her daily life. In the hour of death we do not want critical explanations; in most cases, those to whom they would be offered are incapable of understanding them. A few words, breathing the sense of the

whole Christian world, such as 'I know that my Redeemer liveth,' (though the exact meaning of them may be doubtful to the Hebrew scholar); 'I shall go to him, but he shall not return to me;' touch a chord which would never be reached by the most skilful exposition of the argument of one of St. Paul's Epistles."—(p. 405.)

"The least expression of Scripture is weighty; it affects the minds of the hearers in a way that no other language can. Whatever responsibility attaches to idle words, attaches in still greater degree to the idle or fallacious use of Scripture terms. And there is surely a want of proper reverence for Scripture, when we confound the weakest and feeblest applications of its words with their true meaning—when we avail ourselves of their natural power to point them against some enemy—when we divert the eternal words of charity and truth into a defence of some passing opinion. For not only in the days of the Pharisees, but in our own, the letter has been taking the place of the spirit; the least matters, of the greatest, and the primary meaning has been lost in the secondary use."—(pp. 409, 410.)

"The portion of Scripture which more than any other is immediately and universally applicable to our own times is, doubtless, that which is contained in the words of Christ Himself. The reason is that they are words of the most universal import. They do not relate to the circumstances of the time, but to the common life of all mankind. You cannot extract from them a political creed; only, 'Render unto Cæsar the things that are Cæsar's,' and 'The Scribes and Pharisees sit in Moses' seat; whatsoever, therefore, they say unto you do, but after their works do not.' They present to us a standard of truth and duty, such as no one can at once and immediately practise—such, in its perfection, no one has fulfilled in this world. But this idealism does not interfere with their influence as a religious lesson. Ideals, even though unrealized, have effect on our daily life. The preacher of the Gospel is, or ought to be, aware that his calls to repentance, his standard of obligations, his lamentations over his own shortcomings or those of others, do not at

once-convert hundreds or thousands, as on the day of Pentecost. Yet it does not follow that they are thrown away, or that it would be well to substitute for them mere prudential or economical lessons, lectures on health or sanitary improvement. For they tend to raise men above themselves, providing them with Sabbaths as well as working-days, giving them a taste of 'the good word of God' and of 'the powers of the world to come.' Human nature needs to be idealized; it seems as if it took a dislike to itself when presented always in its ordinary attire; it lives on in the hope of becoming better. And the image or hope of a better life—the vision of Christ crucified—which is held up to it, doubtless has an influence; not like the rushing mighty wind of the day of Pentecost; it may rather be compared to the leaven 'which a woman took and hid in three measures of meal, till the whole was leavened.'

"The Parables of our Lord are a portion of the New Testament, which we may apply in the most easy and literal manner. The persons in them are the persons among whom we live and move; there are times and occasions at which the truths symbolized by them come home to the hearts of all who have ever been impressed by religion. We have been prodigal sons returning to our Father; servants to whom talents have been entrusted; labourers in the vineyard inclined to murmur at our lot, when compared with that of others, yet receiving every man his due; well satisfied Pharisees; repentant Publicans:—we have received the seed, and the cares of the world have choked it—we hope also at times that we have found the pearl of great price after sweeping the house—we are ready like the Good Samaritan to shew kindness to all mankind. Of these circumstances of life or phases of mind, which are typified by the parables, most Christians have experience. We may go on to apply many of them further to the condition of nations and Churches. Such a treasury has Christ provided us of things new and old, which refer to all time and all mankind—may we not say in His own words—'Because He is the Son of Man?'

"There is no language of Scripture which penetrates the individual soul, and embraces all the world in the arms of its love, in the same manner as that of Christ Himself. Yet

the Epistles contain lessons which are not found in the Gospels, or, at least, not expressed with the same degree of clearness. For the Epistles are nearer to actual life—they relate to the circumstances of the first believers, to their struggles with the world without, to their temptations and divisions from within—their subject is not only the doctrine of the Christian religion, but the business of the early Church. And although their circumstances are not our circumstances—we are not afflicted or persecuted, or driven out of the world, but in possession of the blessings, and security, and property of an established religion—yet there is a Christian spirit which infuses itself into all circumstances, of which they are a pure and living source."—(pp. 413—415.)

"Even in this life, there are numberless links which unite moral good with intellectual truth. It is hardly too much to say that the one is but a narrower form of the other. Truth is to the world what holiness of life is to the individual—to man collectively the source of justice and peace and good.

"There are many ways in which the connexion between truth and good may be traced in the interpretation of Scripture. Is it a mere chimera that the different sections of Christendom may meet on the common ground of the New Testament? Or that the individual may be urged by the vacancy and unprofitableness of old traditions to make the Gospel his own—a life of Christ in the soul, instead of a theory of Christ which is in a book, or written down? Or that in missions to the heathen, Scripture may become the expression of universal truths rather than of the tenets of particular men or Churches? That would remove many obstacles to the reception of Christianity. Or that the study of Scripture may have a more important place in a liberal education than hitherto? Or that the 'rational service' of interpreting Scripture may dry up the crude and dreamy vapours of religious excitement? Or, that in preaching, new sources of spiritual health may flow from a more natural use of Scripture? Or that the lessons of Scripture may have a nearer way to the hearts of the poor when disengaged from theological formulas?"—(pp. 423, 424.)

INSPIRATION.

"ALMOST all Christians agree in the word which use and tradition have consecrated to express the reverence which they truly feel for the Old and New Testaments. But here the agreement of opinion ends; the meaning of inspiration has been variously explained, or more often passed over in silence from a fear of stirring the difficulties that would arise about it. It is one of those theological terms which may be regarded as 'great peacemakers,' but which are also sources of distrust and misunderstanding. For while we are ready to shake hands with any one who uses the same language as ourselves, a doubt is apt to insinuate itself whether he takes language in the same senses—whether a particular term conveys all the associations to another which it does to ourselves—whether it is not possible that one who disagrees about the word may not be more nearly agreed about the thing. The advice has, indeed, been given to the theologian that he 'should take care of words and leave things to themselves;' the authority, however, who gives the advice is not good—it is placed by Goethe in the mouth of Mephistopheles. Pascal seriously charges the Jesuits with acting on a similar maxim—excommunicating those who meant the same thing and said another, holding communion with those who said the same thing and meant another. But this is not the way to heal the wounds of the Church of Christ; we cannot thus 'skin and film' the weak places of theology. Errors about words, and the attribution to words themselves of an excessive importance, lie at the root of theological as of other confusions. In theology they are more dangerous than in other sciences, because they cannot so readily be brought to the test of facts.

"The word inspiration has received more numerous gradations and distinctions of meaning than perhaps any other in the whole of theology. There is an inspiration of superintendence and an inspiration of suggestion; an inspiration which would have been consistent with the Apostle or Evangelist falling into error, and an inspiration which would have prevented him from erring; verbal organic inspiration by which the inspired person is the passive utterer of a Divine Word, and an inspiration which acts through the character of the

sacred writer; there is an inspiration which absolutely communicates the fact to be revealed or statement to be made, and an inspiration which does not supersede the ordinary knowledge of human events; there is an inspiration which demands infallibility in matters of doctrine, but allows for mistakes in fact. Lastly, there is a view of inspiration which recognises only its supernatural and prophetic character, and a view of inspiration which regards the Apostles and Evangelists as equally inspired in their writings and in their lives, and in both receiving the guidance of the Spirit of truth in a manner not different in kind but only in degree from ordinary Christians. . . .

"The subject will clear of itself if we bear in mind two considerations:—First, that the nature of inspiration can only be known from the examination of Scripture. There is no other source to which we can turn for information; and we have no right to assume some imaginary doctrine of inspiration like the infallibility of the Roman Catholic Church. To the question, 'What is inspiration?' the first answer therefore is, 'That idea of Scripture which we gather from the knowledge of it.' It is no mere *à priori* notion, but one to which the book is itself a witness. It is a fact which we infer from the study of Scripture - not of one portion only, but of the whole. Obviously then it embraces writings of very different kinds—the book of Esther, for example, or the Song of Solomon, as well as the Gospel of St. John. It is reconcileable with the mixed good and evil of the characters of the Old Testament, which nevertheless does not exclude them from the favour of God, with the attribution to the Divine Being of actions at variance with that higher revelation, which He has given of Himself in the Gospel; it is not inconsistent with imperfect or opposite aspects of the truth as in the book of Job or Ecclesiastes, with variations of fact in the Gospels or the books of Kings and Chronicles, with inaccuracies of language in the Epistles of St. Paul. For these are all found in Scripture; neither is there any reason why they should not be, except a general impression that Scripture ought to have been written in a way different from what it has. A principle of progressive revelation admits them all; and this is already contained in the words of our Saviour, 'Moses because of the hardness

of your hearts;' or even in the Old Testament, 'Henceforth there shall be no more this proverb in the house of Israel. For what is progressive is necessarily imperfect in its earlier stages, and even erring to those who come after, whether it be the maxims of a half-civilized world which are compared with those of a civilized one, or the law with the Gospel. Scripture itself points the way to answer the moral objections to Scripture. Lesser difficulties remain, but only such as would be found commonly in writings of the same age or country. There is no more reason why imperfect narratives should be excluded from Scripture than imperfect grammar; no more ground for expecting that the New Testament would be logical or Aristotelian in form, than that it would be written in Attic Greek.

"The other consideration is one which has been neglected by writers on this subject. It is this—that any true doctrine of inspiration must conform to all well-ascertained facts of history or of science. The same fact cannot be true and untrue, any more than the same words can have two opposite meanings. The same fact cannot be true in religion when seen by the light of faith, and untrue in science when looked at through the medium of evidence or experiment. But if so, there is no need of elaborate reconcilements of revelation and science; they reconcile themselves the moment any scientific truth is distinctly ascertained. As the idea of nature enlarges, the idea of revelation also enlarges; it was a temporary misunderstanding which severed them. And as the knowledge of nature which is possessed by the few is communicated in its leading features at least to the many, they will receive with it a higher conception of the ways of God to man.

"Commentators are often more occupied with the proof of miracles than with the declaration of life and immortality; with the fulfilment of the details of prophecy than with its life and power; with the reconcilement of the discrepancies in the narrative of the infancy, pointed out by Schleiermacher, than with the importance of the great event of the appearance of the Saviour,—'*To this end was I born and for this cause came I into the world, that I should bear witness unto the truth.*'"—(pp. 344—352.)

CREEDS.

"The creeds are acknowledged to be a part of Christianity; they stand in a close relation to the words of Christ and His Apostles; nor can it be said that any heterodox formula makes a nearer approach to a simple and scriptural rule of faith . . . .

"The language of the New Testament is the first utterance and consciousness of the mind of Christ; or the immediate vision of the Word of life (1 John i. 1) as it presented itself before the eyes of His first followers, or as the sense of His truth and power grew upon them (Romans i. 3, 4); the language of the Creeds is the result of three or four centuries of reflection and controversy . . . .

"That advantage which the New Testament has over the teaching of the Church, as representing what may be termed the childhood of the Gospel, would be lost if its language were required to conform to that of the Creeds."—(pp. 353, 354.)

"If any one who is about to become a clergyman feels or thinks that he feels that some of the preceding statements cast a shade of trouble or suspicion on his future walk of life who, either from the influence of a stronger mind than his own, or from some natural tendency in himself, has been led to examine those great questions which lie on the threshold of the higher study of theology, and experiences a sort of shrinking or dizziness at the prospect which is opening upon him; let him lay to heart the following considerations:— First, that he may possibly not be the person who is called upon to pursue such inquiries. No man should busy himself with them who has not clearness of mind enough to see things as they are, and a faith strong enough to rest in that degree of knowledge which God has really given; or who is unable to separate the truth from his own religious wants and experiences. For the theologian as well as the philosopher has need of 'dry light,' 'unmingled with any tincture of the affections,' the more so as his conclusions are oftener liable to be disordered by them. He who is of another temperament may find another work to do, which is in some respects a higher one. Unlike philosophy, the Gospel has an ideal life to offer, not to a few only, but to all. There is one word of caution, however, to be given to those who renounce inquiry; it is that they cannot retain the right to condemn inquirers. Their duty is to say with Nicodemus, 'Doth the Gospel condemn any man before it hear him?' although the answer may be only 'Art thou also of Galilee?' They have chosen the path of practical usefulness, and they should acknowledge that it is a narrow path. For any but a 'strong swimmer' will be insensibly drawn out of it by the tide of public opinion or the current of party.

"Secondly, let him consider that the difficulty is not so great as imagination sometimes paints it. It is a difficulty which arises chiefly out of differences of education in different classes of society. . . Criticism itself is not only negative; if it creates some difficulties, it does away others. It may put us at

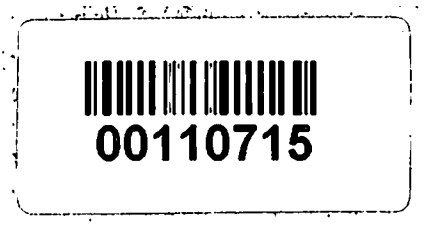
variance with a party or section of Christians in our own neighbourhood. But on the other hand, it enables us to look at all men as they are in the sight of God, not as they appear to human eye, separated and often interdicted from each other by lines of religious demarcation, it divides us from the parts to unite us to the whole. That is a great help to religious communion. It does away with the supposed opposition of reason and faith. It throws us back on the conviction that religion is a personal thing, in which certainty is to be slowly won and not assumed as the result of evidence or testimony. It places us, in some respects (though it be deemed a paradox to say so), more nearly in the position of the first Christians to whom the New Testament was not yet given, in whom the Gospel was a living word, not yet embodied in forms or supported by ancient institutions.

"Thirdly, the suspicion or difficulty which attends critical inquiries is no reason for doubting their value. The Scripture nowhere leads us to suppose that the circumstance of all men speaking well of us is any ground for supposing that we are acceptable in the sight of God. And there is no reason why the condemnation of others should be witnessed to by our own conscience. Perhaps it may be true that, owing to the jealousy or fear of some, the reticence of others, the terrorism of a few, we may not always find it easy to regard these subjects with calmness and judgment. But, on the other hand, these accidental circumstances have nothing to do with the question at issue; they cannot have the slightest influence on the meaning of the words, or on the truth of facts. No one can carry out the principle that public opinion or Church authority is the guide to truth, when he goes beyond the limits of his own Church or country. That is a consideration which may well make him pause before he accepts of such a guide in the journey to another world. All the arguments for repressing inquiries into Scripture in Protestant countries hold equally in Italy and Spain for repressing inquiries into matters of fact or doctrine, and so for denying the Scriptures to the common people.

"Lastly, let him be assured that there is some nobler idea of truth than is supplied by the opinion of mankind in general, or the voice of parties in a Church. Every one, whether a

student of theology or not, has need to make war against his prejudices no less than against his passions; and, in the religious teacher, the first is even more necessary than the last. For, while the vices of mankind are in a great degree isolated, and are, at any rate, reprobated by public opinion, their prejudices have a sort of communion or kindred with the world without. They are a collective evil, and have their being in the interest, classes, states of society, and other influences amid which we live. He who takes the prevailing opinions of Christians and decks them out in their gayest colours—who reflects the better mind of the world to itself—is likely to be its favourite teacher. In that ministry of the Gospel, even when assuming forms repulsive to persons of education, no doubt the good is far greater than the error or harm. But there is also a deeper work which is not dependent on the opinions of men, in which many elements combine, some alien to religion, or accidentally at variance with it. That work can hardly expect to win much popular favour, so far as it runs counter to the feelings of religious parties. But he who bears a part in it may feel a confidence, which no popular caresses or religious sympathy could inspire, that he has by a divine help been enabled to plant his foot somewhere beyond the waves of time. He may depart hence before the natural term, worn out with intellectual toil; regarded with suspicion by many of his contemporaries; yet not without a sure hope that the love of truth, which men of saintly lives often seem to slight, is, nevertheless, accepted before God."
—(pp. 430—433.)

Printed by Messrs. Parker, Cornmarket, Oxford.



Digitized with financial assistance from the
Government of Maharashtra
on 19 September, 2016